

St. John's R.C. JMI School

Homework Policy

The Mission of St. John's School is:

- to educate each child entrusted to our care to their full potential.
- to sustain and develop the love and practice of our Catholic Faith.
- to demonstrate the presence of Christ in the community

The school policy for homework reflects the consensus of opinion of the governors and teaching staff. It has been drawn up as a result of staff and governor discussions, and consultations with parents which took place in 1997/98. The policy has the full agreement of the Governing Body. This document was agreed at the April 1998 meeting of the Governing Body Curriculum Sub-Committee.

Aims

To aid each child's progress towards achieving his or her full potential with the assistance, support and cooperation of parents.

By setting a little homework on a regular basis and on an increasing ratio, from Reception class to Year 6, to adequately prepare children for the demands and responsibilities of secondary school.

Objectives

To provide an enjoyable and purposeful supplement to class work.

To provide opportunity for the child to practice what has been learnt in class, including the development of the basic skills e.g. tables, spellings, independent research skills etc.

To provide a practical opportunity for parents to become involved in the academic development of their child.

To provide a practical opportunity for the child to begin to take responsibility for organising their own workload.

What is homework?

Homework is not necessarily written work. It is any task that a child is asked to complete at home. It may consist of reading, learning by heart and reinforcement of class work, research and project work or further practice of skills learnt in class.

Good primary school practice requires that we give credence to other developmental needs of the child. At St. John's we appreciate the value of extra curricular activities, (sport, music, dancing, drama, the uniformed groups, other hobbies, etc.). We recognise the demands made on pupils in Year 3 as they undertake the Sacramental Preparation programmes and in setting homework we

allow space for these. A well balanced, healthy child should be encouraged to develop their particular interests in many of these activities in their own time.

Should parents wish their children to spend more time in structured academic work, they will find much suitable material in most local book shops.

As with all other matters relating to children, teachers are available to discuss homework with parents.

As the primary educators of their children parents are encouraged to support and reinforce the shared expectations by as many different means as possible. Learning is a shared responsibility between children parents and staff. Children are encouraged and challenged in their learning as they aim for excellence. In order to achieve this goal we as a school must work together with parents and guardians as a partnership, expanding the curriculum, extending it to the home and building on experiences shared outside school.

Staff are expected to work towards this aim by:

- providing a range of homework tasks and activities to consolidate learning in class.
- ensure the children have a clear understanding of the tasks involved and a common understanding of the high expectations held of them individually according to their ability.
- communicating with parents and keeping them informed of children's progress, projects and topics to be studied and developed and individual targets which have been negotiated.

Pupils are expected to work towards this aim by:

- making full use of all the opportunities they are presented with.
- tackling home tasks promptly and with a positive attitude.
- taking pride in presentation and content, acknowledging the high personal standard expected.
- being organised so that necessary books and equipment are not left at school.
- taking responsibility for handing in the completed task on the agreed day.

Parents are expected to work towards the schools aims by:

- providing suitable quiet surroundings i.e. not in front of the television.
- encouraging younger family members to play quieter games if in the same room.
- encouraging children to persevere with a task even if it seems daunting at first, and giving support if necessary.
- giving due importance to non-written tasks such as hearing reading and assisting in the learning of times tables and weekly spellings.
- keeping the staff informed of any changes in the child's circumstances which may affect their learning.

GUIDELINES

Homework is given purely if it provides positive reinforcement of work done in school. It is seen as a definite need and not as a time filler.

Homework is considered an integral part of the curriculum. It enriches and consolidates, develops research skills and cultivates the mind to nurture the seeds of knowledge, therefore homework, when set, is compulsory.

For this discipline to be of value it is important that work be handed in on time.

Homework may be set during half term holidays, but not during the Christmas, Easter or Summer Holidays. Children may be encouraged to keep a diary during the Summer Holiday to be included in a display in school during the Autumn term. These diaries are seen as personal to the child and will not be marked.

The average amount of time to be spent on homework each evening, including non-written tasks such as; reading, learning tables etc., should be approximately:

Infants	-	10 - 20 minutes
Years 3 & 4	-	20 - 30 minutes
Year 5		30 - 40 minutes
Year 6		40 - 60 minutes

A standard approach will be adopted throughout the Infant and Junior departments in order to avoid confusion for the child and parents.

In order to allow for the child's other activities at least two nights will always be provided to complete homework. (Except where the homework is classwork that has been sent home to be finished because of a lack of application on the part of the child.)

Parents will be advised at the beginning of the school year of the homework expectations of the class teacher. They will also be given details of ways in which they may be asked to assist the child at home.

A system for informing parents of homework that has been set and for providing feedback to parents will be evolved during 1998/99.

Infants

Homework will usually involve the practice of basic skills, such as reading, learning the order of the alphabet, learning prayers, spellings, tables and handwriting..

Each child is provided with a reading diary. Parents are invited to write comments in the diary about the child's enjoyment of, or interest in the reading book.

There will be many times when your child will be asked to collect and bring in topic related items or books for contribution to projects. Specific research tasks may be set from Year 2.

Juniors

It is desirable that every child does some reading every night, sometimes as a "sharing" experience with an adult. reading material may include fiction, non-fiction, annuals, comics etc. It should be a personal choice from books at home or from the local library. It is important that parents monitor children's reading.

Parents will be sent a homework timetable, showing the days on which a particular subject is set and the time for completion.

Parents may be requested to purchase English and maths homework text-books for use by their child.

Research work or special project assignments may be set to reinforce topics being studied in school. These may well be ongoing over a longer period of time, emphasis will be on research skills, presentation, illustration time management and punctuality.